

SMC IMPACT REPORT

2019-21

In partnership with District
Administration, Sonipat

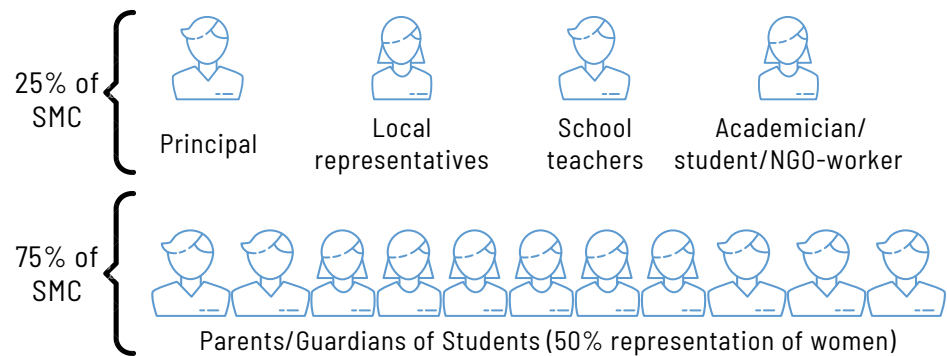


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SCHOOL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES

School Management Committees (SMCs) are elected bodies mandated to be formed under section 21 of RTE in all government and government-aided schools, intended to bring in community voice in school's development and act as an accountability mechanism. It consists of representatives of various stakeholders.



Parents have the highest incentive to demand a better quality of education for their children. Various research by the [World Bank](#), [UNESCO](#) suggests that increased **parent participation in schools** leads to improvement in the quality of education, efficiency of a school. This has also been an integral part of India's school education policies and is viewed as an essential element of decentralizing education governance.

SMCs IN HARYANA

The term of SMCs in Haryana is two years. SMC's responsibilities towards the schools can be imagined similar to the role of Panchayats a village. Following are the responsibilities of SMCs:

- Supporting the school in identifying & driving improvements such as in infrastructure, mid-day meals, preparing (SDP)
- Ensuring proper functioning of the school by monitoring teacher attendance, use of grants, etc
- Improving the trust and communication between school and community eg. supporting organizing PTMs, informing about child rights & reporting violations if any

This report collates activities in the project, expected & achieved results for SMCs in 11 schools for the 2019-2021 term.

NEED FOR THE PROJECT

Results from a study conducted in Haryana [1] on Evaluation & Impact of RTE Act in Haryana by the Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development point out the urgent need to make SMCs functional. It shows:

- Lack/ineffective structures like meetings,
- Lack of capacity to engage SMCs,
- Lack of belief in parent participation in schools

A few learnings from the study are:

61%

parents members weren't aware of decisions passed by SMCs; out of which few were Presidents of SMC. Only a formality of getting members signatures was taking place

30%

of communities, Panchayat representatives of SMC weren't aware of any issue/decision on which they had signed

85%

of schools had no maintained registers/written records of complaints and no one else other than the Principal was involved in the redressal of complaints. In the majority of the schools, complaints were verbally launched and sorted by school head only





PROJECT FOCUS AREAS

Samarthya, with the support of the District Administration, is working in 11 schools of Rai block in Sonipat district.

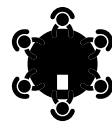
The project focuses on:



Effective formation of SMC

This ensures:

- Clear expectations and roles are communicated to parents before the formation so that those who can give their time & intent become members
- Public nominations increasing the chances of ownership in members



Improving the quality of SMC meetings

- Regular SMC meetings ensure members being regularly updated about school's needs/ challenges & happenings & enables shared decision making
- Effective meetings are a primary platform where parents can voice their concerns & listen to the staff, decide action plan



Capacity building of SMC members & staff

- Activating SMCs requires stakeholders to be aware of their designation, responsibilities, how to perform their expected roles.
- We work towards improving capacity of SMC members & belief of school staff towards activation of SMCs



Improving parent teacher engagement

SMCs play a link role between staff & parents. We work towards ensuring SMCs enable improvements in PTMs by improving frequency, attendance of parents & quality of discussions in PTMs



Improving awareness about grievance redressal mechanism

To address the issues raised by SMCs, a necessary step is to improve awareness of SMC members of the process of identifying, raising & following-up on grievances

Progress on each of the above focus areas in the 11 schools is discussed below

A person's hands are visible on the left, holding a white document. The background shows a whiteboard and a desk with various items like a pen, a marker, and a folder. The overall scene is dimly lit with a blue tint.

PROJECT OUTCOMES

OUTCOMES

Over the last 2 years, we have seen numerous changes in how teachers, parents, students have grown in their roles. Schools & SMCs have come a long way as shown below.

This data is from surveys conducted at the beginning, mid, and end of the 2-year term of SMC members from the schools we work in.



IMPROVED CAPACITY OF SMC MEMBERS & STAFF

In 2019, **50% of SMC members interviewed weren't aware of any responsibilities of an SMC member, and the rest 50% just knew a maximum of 2.**

We continuously build capacity of SMC members & staff, providing knowledge, skills, & mindsets by:

- Designing SMC meetings with a component of training
- Discussions with staff before & after SMC meetings
- Designing resources such as SMC handbook, planning sheet

100%

of the members are aware of at least 3 responsibilities of SMC. Few could even tell 5-6 such responsibilities. This **led to varied issues being raised in SMC meetings** such as opening of children's bank accounts, safety of girls, reorganization of non-teaching staff etc. SMC members feel more confident & understand the importance of their role.

97%

of the members are aware of at least 3 ways of identifying issues in the school. Talking to their child, other staff members, conducting school rounds are the most common ones



SMC members conducting school rounds

OUTCOMES



IMPROVED QUALITY OF MEETINGS

SMC meetings have been regular with improved quality of discussions. This was done by:

- Conducting **regular SMC meetings** in all the schools with the support from school staff
- Conducting agenda-based discussions with participation of each member in creating agenda & decision-making
- Pre-planning with staff for improved attendance, for example, ensuring the time is suitable, conducting home visits before the meetings

100+

SMC meetings have been conducted across 11 schools with greater than 50% parent attendance

93%

of the members said that issues are raised by both staff and parents in the meetings

83%

of the members could mention more than 4 topics of discussion in SMC meetings. Improving MDM, enrollment, student learning outcomes, infrastructure, filling staff vacancies were the most common ones

This number of meetings and attendance data is affected by schools being closed due to COVID for almost half the tenure of this SMC

Regular effective meetings lead to, not just, development of schools but also increased satisfaction of parents from schools, stronger trust between parents & staff and increased confidence in members to voice out their opinions.



Parent SMC member

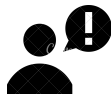
"Since I've started attending the SMC meetings regularly, I've seen that the school really tries to work on the issues we discuss in the meetings and the solutions we suggest. I have started believing more in the school and teachers because of SMC meetings."

"SMC is a body that meets to talk about the welfare of the school, issues that need to be resolved. I too have raised issues like lack of cleanliness, water & need for increasing height of toilet walls. This experience has taught me a lot. My fear to express myself has gone. Now, I can even stand on the stage & speak about anything."



Student SMC member

OUTCOMES

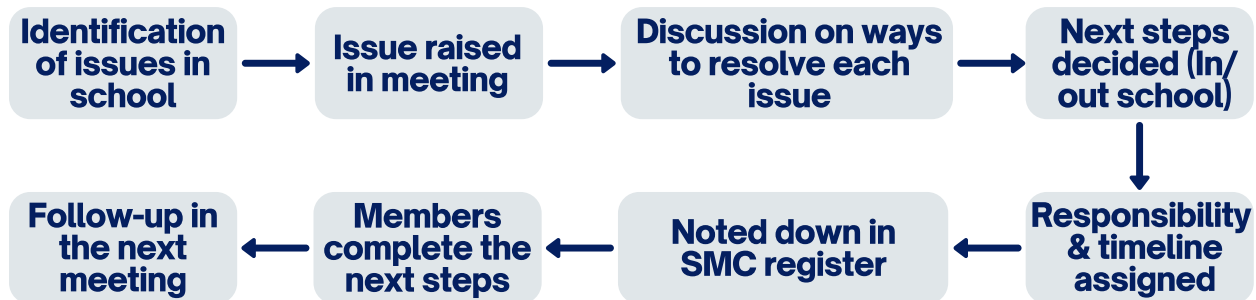


INCREASED NUMBER OF GRIEVANCES RAISED & ADDRESSED

Collective decision-making, proper documentation of the issues discussed & follow-ups on the issues raised is an important aspect of improving functioning of SMC & building trust between staff & parents. Our activities are:

- Informing SMC members of the process of identifying, raising & addressing issues.
- Supporting SMC members at each step in the process, for example, arranging meetings with BEO/ DEO, conducting house visits to inform parents, etc
- Enabling school staff to take this process ahead
- Each meeting was documented in the minutes sheet with signatures of members

The current process is:



60%

of the 100+ issues raised in the meetings have been completely or partially resolved in all schools

Various types of issues were raised by both parents and teachers in SMC meetings such as:

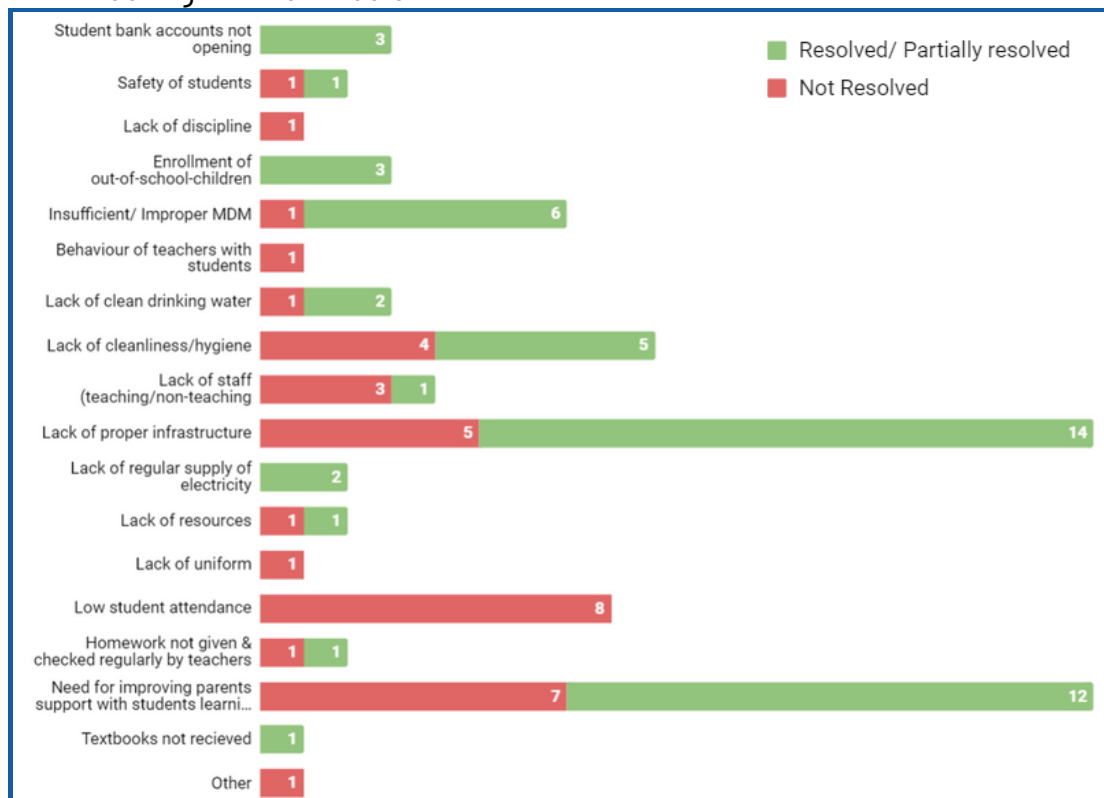
- Lack of proper infrastructure
- Lack of cleanliness/hygiene
- Insufficient/ Improper MDM
- Low student attendance
- Enrollment of out-of-school-children
- Student bank accounts not opening
- Homework not given & checked regularly by teachers
- Lack of clean drinking water
- Lack of staff (teaching/non-teaching)
- Safety of students
- Lack of regular supply of electricity
- Lack of resources
- Lack of discipline
- Lack of uniform
- Need for improving parents support with students learning
- Textbooks not received
- Behaviour of teachers with students

OUTCOMES



INCREASED NUMBER OF GRIEVANCES RAISED & ADDRESSED

An overview of the status & frequency of the issues raised in SMC meetings is shown below:



- The resolution rate is high in most cases but some issues took more than 1 year to get resolved.
- The resolution of issues, specifically infrastructure-related, were resolved with support from CSR companies
- SMC supporting with student learnings & reaching out to parents increased once schools closed due to COVID

EFFORTS IN SCHOOLS:



SMC members raised the issue of opening student bank accounts. Post meeting, members visited the bank to raise the issue with the bank manager. The manager assured no issue in the future & shared guidelines



SMC members conducted home visits in the communities when schools closed due to COVID, to speak to parents about various ways the teachers are teaching, which apps to download etc.



SMC members submitting their demands to MLA, in the presence of BEO

OUTCOMES



EFFECTIVE FORMATION OF SMC

A participatory process of formation of SMC can help in explaining the way SMC functions i.e by the people, for the people.

This was done by:

- Preparation with staff
- Inviting parents through multiple ways like invitation cards
- Explaining SMC's role & expectation to parents
- Asking for nominations & conducting voting if needed

52%

of the parents said that they nominated themselves to become SMC members.

This number is low due to new SMCs being formed again in a few schools after a second circular from the state.

Long-term impact of such a process ensures increased ownership in members due to public nominations, understanding of expectations before they sign up for the role



Parent SMC member

'It was a very good day today. I liked that many parents nominated themselves, spoke openly. The principal also appreciated us (old SMC members) today

'Before this meeting, we didn't know about SMC. Now we know that SMC is like a panchayat in the school, and if any child studying in the school faces any issue, it is our duty to bring it to the committee, discuss with them and find solutions. I too have nominated myself.'



Parent SMC member



Parent nominating themselves

OUTCOMES



IMPROVED PARENT TEACHER ENGAGEMENT

Invested SMCs are can become a strong link between parents & staff. We supported schools in organizing PTMs in the schools by the following activities:



Conducting SMC meeting to discuss agenda, date & time



Preparation with staff



Inviting parents through multiple ways like cards, munnadi



Discussion with staff on the report & next steps

Capturing attendance and feedback of parents on the day

60% average parent attendance in PTMs was observed in most schools



Parent-Teacher Meeting

STORIES OF HOPE



Shivnath ji and Subhash ji are two SMC members of Liwaspur school who attend meetings regularly. On the day of SMC meeting, they had just finished their night shift at work. They didn't just attend the meeting but also went to meet the bank manager for resolving student bank account issue.



Pooja Ji is a parent member in Liwaspur. When schools were closed due to pandemic, a lot of children didn't have any textbooks of the new grade they were entering at the time. Witnessing this as a challenge, Pooja Ji started going door to door working to enable an exchange of books between children from different grades covering more than 300 students in her community



Babban Ji, SMC member of Biswameel School, took ownership to know about the problems of the school. He says, he visits school before the scheduled time on the day of the SMC meeting so that he could be ready for the meeting. On one of those visits, he noticed that the school toilets were not clean. When he raised this issue in the meeting, the toilets were cleaned immediately



Pooja was a student SMC member, in GHS, Rasoi. When asked what would she like to say to the new members, she suggested that, if they are scared to talk, then it is our (old SMC members') duty to tell them that there is no reason to be scared and whatever they want to say, they can in the meeting openly, without any hesitation.'

In our end-of-term interviews, all parents members said they find the SMC meetings useful and they would like to become SMC members again. All of them agreed that the staff is much more welcoming & listen to them with respect.

PLAN AHEAD & SUGGESTIONS

PLAN AHEAD

For the next term of SMC, our focus areas remain the same. Apart from the activities mentioned above, additional goals will be directed towards:

- **Capacity Building of staff to take over the project**

For the project to run smoothly & show sustainable impact, the ownership of working with SMC will slowly shift to the staff. This would mean planning of our team with staff would increase

- **Increasing interaction of SMC with students, other parents, and other SMCs**

To improve the understanding of SMC members of the challenges, especially in the context of reopening of schools after 2+ years, spaces to be created for interaction with all stakeholders, to collectively identify issues, brainstorm solutions & learn from each other

- **Improved process of tracking & reporting grievances other SMCs**

To increase the frequency of following up on grievances, we will focus on improving the process of filing and tracking grievances raised in schools

- **Sharing best practices & learnings with the Department (District & State)**

SUGGESTIONS

- **Improved process of SMC training**

Continuous & high-quality training towards activating SMCs is needed. Accessibility of such trainings can be targetted to reach most members so the time & place can set according to availability of parents

- **Role of officers/resource persons in SMC meetings defined**

Resource persons/SMC team at the state/district level improve the chances of schools adopting the project. This team can also help the schools improving the quality of meetings by observing, giving feedback & brainstorming challenges if any with the schools.

- **Standardized grievance redressal mechanism for SMCs**

For schools to see benefit in working with SMCs & parents to stay energized for their role as a member, grievance mechanism can be standardized with points of contact at district/block such as clear time-bound response time, people responsibility, appeal system etc

ABOUT SAMARTHYA

Samarthya (AEES) was started in February 2017 by Teach For India Alumni to enable participation of parents in schools. We have worked with public schools in Delhi, Sonipat (Haryana) and Punjab, to strengthen the structures which promote parent participation i.e. **Parent-Teacher Meetings (PTMs) & School Management Committees (SMCs)**.


We believe that parents deserve a seat at that table where decisions related to their child's education are made. Their voices need to be heard and deliberated upon.

In Sonipat, Haryana we work with directly 11 schools & communities since February 2018. The 'Parents as Partners' program is being implemented with the support of District Administration in Rai Block of Sonipat.

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